

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

### **Existing Conditions**

Cultural resources represent the tangible and intangible evidence of human behavior and past human occupation. Remnants of past and current human activities and events can be found throughout the area that reflect the exploration, settlement, mining and management by Euro-American cultures. They may consist of the archaeological sites, historic-age buildings and structures, and traditional use areas and cultural places (TCP) that are important to a group's traditional beliefs, religion or cultural practices. These types of resources are finite and non-renewable.

Protection and management of cultural resources is mandated by federal laws and regulations. The primary legislation governing cultural resource management is the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 as amended. Section 106 of NHPA requires that federal agencies take into consideration the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. The term "historic properties" refers to cultural resources, both prehistoric and historic, that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Pacific Northwest Region has a programmatic agreement (PA) with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) that stipulates the Forest Service's responsibilities for complying with NHPA. The Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest is complying with the legal requirements for the identification, evaluation, and treatment of historic properties under the programmatic agreement in lieu of standard consultation procedures in Council's regulations (36 CFR 800).

Past and current cultural resource inventory surveys of the planning analysis area identified 62 previously recorded cultural resource sites dating to the historic period. Within the analysis area the maximum acreage proposed for actions and treatments is approximately 3,972 acres. This area was determined as the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for cultural resources. Thirty one sites are within or directly adjacent to the APE. Those resources include two roads, eight trails, six mining ditches, three refuse dumps, four habitation sites, three mining sites, a gravesite, a Forest Service guard station, a fire lookout, remains of telephone lines, and a dam.

Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP) are places associated "with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that (a) are rooted in that community's history, and (b) are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community" (National Park Service, 1998). TCPs range from mountains and other landforms to plant gathering locations to communities. Traditionally used vegetation located in the analysis area includes mixed conifer and hardwoods, including Douglas-fir, white fir, ponderosa pine, sugar pine, incense cedar, tan oak, madrone, canyon live oak and black oak. Edible and other traditionally used plant products within the area include blackberries, manzanita berries, bulbs (such as onion or lily) bear grass, hazelnuts, and acorns. Elk, Black-tailed deer, black bear, grouse, quail, and other animals inhabit the general area. Native fish, are present in many of the streams in this area but have been impacted by past mining and natural geological processes.

The APE is within the ceded lands of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz, Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde, and the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians. The Forest consulted the following Federally Recognized Tribes concerning the proposed action: The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Indian Tribe, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, Elk Valley Rancheria, and the Tolowa Dee-ni Nation. Review of existing literature did not identify any known TCPs in the APE. At present, consulted tribes have not identified any specific traditional cultural properties that could be affected by project activities. The Confederated Tribes of the Siletz have commented to the Forest that they use timber, plants, and wildlife resources for traditional practices

Of the 31 identified cultural resource sites within the APE, the Forest previously evaluated and determined 15 sites as not eligible and one site is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) with SHPO concurrence. The National Register status of 15 sites remains unevaluated. These sites will be treated and managed as eligible until a formal determination is made. The most recent listings of the National Register of Historic Places were consulted for nominated and listed properties. No listed properties are located within the APE.

## **Environmental Consequences**

Under the regulations an adverse effect is found when an undertaking may alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a cultural resource that qualify the property for inclusion in the National Register. Consideration shall be given to all qualifying characteristics of a historic property, including those that may have been identified subsequent to the original evaluation of the property's eligibility for the National Register. Adverse effects may include reasonably foreseeable effects caused by the undertaking that may occur later in time, be farther removed in distance or be cumulative. Specific examples of adverse effects cited in statute include (36 CFR 800.5):

- Physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the property.
- Removal of the property from its historic location.
- Change of the character of the property's use or of physical features within the property's setting that contribute to its historic significance.
- Introduction of visual, atmospheric or audible elements that diminish the integrity of the property's significant historic features.

Impacts to cultural resources, especially archeological sites, can be generally defined as anything that results in the removal of, displacement of, or damage to artifacts, features, and/or stratigraphic deposits of cultural material. In the case of traditional cultural properties and sacred places, additional considerations may include alterations that would affect the character and use of the location, and/or presence and availability of a specific traditionally used natural resource

## **Alternative 1-No Action**

## **Direct and Indirect Effects**

The “No Action” alternative will not involve any direct project impacts to cultural resources within the analysis area; cultural resources will likely remain in the condition in which they currently exist. The sites will remain as they are, exposed to the customary and natural threats posed to archaeological sites by weathering, erosion, and exposure to the elements.

## **Action Alternatives – Alt 2 and Alt 3**

### **Direct and Indirect Effects**

All of these proposed activities have the potential to alter, damage or destroy eligible and unevaluated cultural resources that are located within the proposed treatment areas. No impacts to cultural resources are anticipated from road maintenance activities. Proposed temporary roads have the potential to adversely impact cultural resource but will be avoided. Proposed haul routes have the potential to directly adversely impact cultural resources but will be avoided and monitored. Decommissioning the following Forest System Roads 100, 152, 160, 660, 610, 650, 665, and 658 has the potential to directly impact cultural resources that parallel, intersect the FSR prism but will be avoided and monitored. The proposed stream crossing improvements will have no effect to cultural resources.

Indirect impacts to all sites within the proposed treatments areas may occur from increased site visibility and erosion caused by removal of overstory vegetation and surface vegetation by mechanized removal and harvest and fire treatments. Increased visibility can substantially increase inadvertent or advertent looting activities. Direct and indirect impacts from prescribed fire to non-combustible sites and materials are mostly caused by increased erosion from loss of ground cover. Direct impacts from fire to historic combustible or fire sensitive sites is caused by the permanent damage or destruction of cultural materials and objects by burning, melting, or consuming the material. All cultural resources will be avoided from ground disturbing activities. Prescribed fire treatments will avoid combustible features of sites.

### **Cumulative Effects for both Action Alternatives**

When discussing the cumulative effects of the Upper Briggs Integrated Project on cultural resources, the previous and future projects and natural events within the current analysis area must be taken into consideration. Previous projects which have occurred within the APE have included timber sales, salvage sales, wildlife improvement projects, mining operations, and recreation improvements. Each of these projects had the potential to adversely affect cultural resources. These projects were required to follow regulations and procedures in regard to protecting cultural resources; and generally resulted in no effect to eligible and unevaluated cultural resource sites within the project area.

Numerous projects that are within or near the analysis area will continue or be initiated during the life of the Upper Briggs project. These include regular ongoing RRSNF management

activities (including permitted use), such as trail maintenance, livestock grazing, utility corridor maintenance, road maintenance, recreation site maintenance, and current mining operations. Each of these activities has the potential to affect cultural resources, though those effects cannot be predicted or measured unless the nature of the activity and specific location are known. Each of these activities requires examination on a case-by-case basis to determine their potential to affect cultural resources. In addition, normal and expected forest-use activities will occur within the analysis area, such as camping, hiking, fuelwood cutting, winter sports, hunting, and fishing. These activities are not expected to have an adverse effect on cultural resources.

Several positive cumulative effects on cultural resources under the proposed action alternative will be cultural resources are monitored, inventoried and evaluated. This will increase the knowledge of mining and historic use patterns of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. The Forest will continue to provide timber and forest products (first foods and materials for traditional practices) used by Tribes for traditional purposes.

Regardless of the alternative selected, the effects associated with the Upper Briggs project combined with the effects from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions will not have a measurable cumulative effect on eligible or unevaluated cultural resources located within the APE if standard mitigation measures are followed.

## Mitigation Measures

Cultural resources in the APE are vulnerable to impacts from mechanical treatments and restoration activities, road construction and decommissioning, prescribed broadcast and pile burning, and from associated activities with these undertakings. All proposed treatments will be managed for having “no effect” to cultural resources. This means that all sites will be avoided by the proposed activities. Upper Briggs project managers will work with the Forest Archaeologist or Zone Archaeologist to assure there is adequate notification and time to implement the required protection measures.

Actions	Design Criteria/Protection Measures
For all activities	<p>Unevaluated sites will be treated as eligible for all actions.</p> <p>No use of vehicles or other mechanized equipment within sites boundaries that are designated for avoidance.</p> <p>No staging of equipment or materials within site boundaries.</p> <p>In the event that cultural materials or human remains are discovered, all activities in the immediate area will stop, the area secured and the Forest Archaeologist and District Ranger will be notified immediately. Work will not resume in that area until the Forest Archaeologist has evaluated the material and has notified the District Ranger that the applicable requirements of 36 CFR 800 and NAGPRA have been completed.</p>
Removal of Vegetation	<p><u>No treatments or ground disturbance within site boundaries</u>  <u>-or-Treatments may be allowed within site boundaries in these cases and provided:</u></p>

	<p>If hand thinning is necessary within site boundaries, an archaeologist will identify features for avoidance Trees are felled away from all site features (i.e. buildings, ditches, trails).</p> <p>No dragging of logs, trees, or thinned material across or within site boundaries or features. Forest archaeologist or Zone archaeologist will identify places to cross over eligible and unevaluated ditches and trails where there will be no effect to the site.</p> <p>No landings or staging of equipment or materials within site boundaries</p> <p>Harvested and thinned material may be removed and crossed over the Taylor Creek Trail. The proposed treatment area along Taylor Creek has been harvested before. Proposed landings along the Taylor Creek Trail should be located to maximize the least disturbance to the physical route and tread of the trail.</p> <p>No staging or piling of slash and waste materials resulting from harvesting and thinning on site.</p> <p>Slash material may be lopped and scattered within site boundaries.</p> <p>Vegetation may be removed adjacent to historic trails and ditches to reduce fuel loading. Trees should be directionally felled away from feature. Very large trees (i.e. over 150 years old) should be retained if present.</p> <p>Hauling routes, yarding and skid trail crossings of historic eligible and unevaluated ditches and trails will be avoided or minimized. If crossings are necessary for the removal of timber an Archaeologist or archaeological technician will work with timber staff to identify the minimal locations appropriate to cross eligible and unevaluated ditches and trails to avoid any impacts to significant characteristics and the physical integrity of the site.</p> <p>Eligible and unevaluated ditches and non-motorized historic trails will not be used for skid trails, temporary roads, or hauling routes.</p>
Prescribed Fire Treatments	<p>Allow broadcast burning over non-combustible sites provided:</p> <p>No ignition points within site boundaries</p> <p>No staging of equipment within site boundaries</p> <p>No slash piles within site boundaries.</p>
	<p>One or more of the following measures will be implemented to protect fire-sensitive sites:</p>

	<p>No slash piles within or adjacent to site features.  Exclude site from burn unit area.  Hand line.  Black line.  Wet line.  Foam retardant.  Structural fire shelter.  Remove heavy fuels from site by hand.  Prevent in-situ heavy fuels that cannot be removed from ignition (e.g., flush-cut &amp; bury stumps).</p> <p>Implement same protective measures for future maintenance burns.</p>
Road decommissioning,	<p>Avoid ground disturbance to historic eligible and unevaluated trails and ditches: trail alignments will not be rerouted.  Maintenance of historic trail tread surface materials will not be changed from the existing type of materials, intact contributing segments of ditches will not be obliterated or rerouted. Large boulders, vegetation or berms may be placed on top of or next to trails and ditches to close area from motorized access.</p>
Existing roads and construction of temporary roads for hauling	<p>No protection measures for the Onion Mt road (06102200759/SK-0759). Road was determined not eligible with SHPO concurrence.  See also measure listed under vegetation removal</p>
Stream Crossing Improvements	<p>N/A, No sites present</p>

### **Determination of Effect**

Adequate inventories have been completed of the APE to identify cultural resources. Cultural resources will be identified for avoidance. Appropriate protection measures will be implemented to assure sites are avoided during all phases of the project. The Upper Briggs Integrated Project is expected to have a **No Effect** to historic properties as defined under 36 CFR 800 if the protection and mitigation measures are implemented. This project is in compliance with the NHPA of 1966 as amended, EO 11593, and EO 13007. Monitoring of historic properties during and after project implementation will be completed.

If these measures are followed the undertaking meets a finding of “Historic Properties Avoided” Stipulation III B. (II) of the Oregon Programmatic Agreement between the Pacific Northwest Region, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Under the Stipulation, the Forest may proceed with the undertaking provided that avoidance of all properties is achieved and documentation is provided to the SHPO.

